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# SECOND WESSEX

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

JUNE, 1962

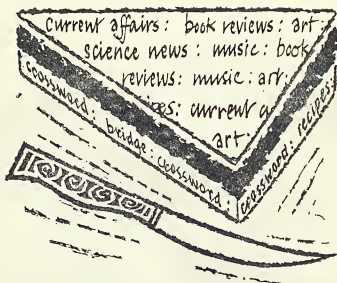
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## Editorial

THE increased size and price of this edition of "2nd Wessex" is largely due to the singular lack of enthusiasm with which its predecessor was greeted. We have not gone to press until later in the year than is customary in order to obtain better quality throughout. We hope that our efforts have not been in vain.

The bulk of this edition is composed of creative writing, and that is how it should be. In two cases the book review has been expanded into a full length article. The success of this idea is to be measured by the degree with which irrelevancy is avoided.

My thanks are due for the co-operation of G. F. Wilson and Co. Ltd., the printers; for the ceaseless work of Janet Price and Jenny Euston; the patient typing of Valerie Bryant; and the firm support and useful ideas of Pete Banham. I should also like to thank Dave Seymour for the help he has given throughout the year with his interesting and original cover designs.



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## All This Talking

THE train had stopped somewhere and I woke up suddenly with the sun slanting through the mud-streaked window on to my face. I felt as though I couldn't move. I seemed to be moulded there into the seat like something big, solid and heavy in its right place, and I didn't want to shift a muscle or a nerve because I was fixed in a kind of harmonious temporary agreement with the sun and the window. Outside I could see people and faces twisting and turning and I could see that the air was sharp and cold. There was silence in the compartment now and just a few ragged floating snippets of sound. I hadn't thought of fitting them to the moving lips and hands turning pages and folding newspapers before I'd dozed off because the heavy pulsating roar of dead weight forcing wheels against rails every second had turned it all into an unreal dumb-show, a television screen with the sound turned off. Somewhere there was a clicking of needles. I looked round and saw that a woman close by was knitting, or rather, two hands were knitting, shuttling briskly and sharply back and forth like pieces of clean, efficient machinery. The face above them was expressionless and paid no attention to the delicate, well balanced mechanism of shuttling hands and clicking needles, but stared instead at the back of the soft, red seat over the face opposite with wide, dark, vacant, unmoving eyes that said nothing and suggested nothing. Then I was annoyed because it seemed to me that it was wrong to have wide, staring eyes that said nothing and suggested nothing. I read books, you see, and long important words, and those deep emotionless eyes weren't thinking about books or long words or short ones either. It wasn't right that she shouldn't be thinking about how to establish universal ethics or to decide whether this war or that war or any war was just. If she was right not to think about those things and to sit there with big, open, impassive eyes not looking at the whirring hands and clicking needles, then I must be wrong.

But however much you think, nothing happens. I hadn't moved, I hadn't stopped looking, and nothing in the compartment had changed in the slightest way. The passengers, like soft, touchable statues poised in nervous suspension, hadn't stirred on the plush red seats that held them all in orbit at what seemed to be the right distance from one another: a perfectly balanced equilibrium of living things and dead things, like china vases and figures set here and there in convincing visual contiguity in the window of a curio shop, or chess pieces inflexibly established in quiescent apposition by so many demarcated squares in accordance with the timeless rules of the game. Nobody moved, I suppose, because nobody needed to move, so that all I could see was living things and dead things totally absorbed in being comfortable and motionless.

The woman's wide eyes, feeling nothing, like camera lenses, were set in a sad, middle-aged face that could have been Maltese or Italian and had a kind of strength and solidity. I wondered if she was kind and generous too. If she was, that would explain it, I thought, that would

at least relate this whimsical abstraction with the world outside where people had emotions and feelings. She must be knitting socks or a sweater for her husband or for one of her sons. That would give sense and meaning to the absurd, unthinking clockwork that was transforming a reluctant, bobbing thread of wool into an as yet shapeless garment. That's good enough, I said to myself, now you can relax again. If I couldn't read generosity and thankless self-sacrifice in those dead eyes the fault was mine, or maybe those qualities were buried too deeply, like the repressed, molten core of the earth that you couldn't see from the outside. Maybe the experience of too many ideals dying from the cold and too much Summer happiness withering in late Autumn winds had stratified spontaneous feelings into inert layers of granite, year after year, until you couldn't see them or sense them any longer. The sun was dancing now and dragging the mind back and away from visible, touchable things. I could imagine the irony of awakening realisation striking blow after blow until the frightened soul couldn't retreat any further . . . "Stop! Alright, you win. What is it you want?" "Live without hope, numb. Just knit socks and sweaters out of generosity. You can love that much and no more." "No! That's not enough. Life must be worth living—no! Stop!" She cringes and tries to hide from the one last deadening steel blow that jolts . . . And suddenly the train was moving, grating on its dispirited army of wheels and making the bodies inside it feel very insignificant and wide awake again. Then it was turning away from the sun and laughing at the passengers because they were disappointed at being dragged out of the light and lazy warmth but couldn't do anything about it.

The train swerved past empty, grey warehouses with cheerless, grimy windows, and ugly hoardings that were too big and offered you endless varieties of synthetic joy in exchange for cash, and then it picked up speed as it left the town behind. After a few minutes I got the feel of the heavy metallic rumble and settled down again. I paused and wondered what else I could think about. Maybe I'd been wrong again about the woman knitting. She didn't have to be generous or self-sacrificing to knit sweaters for her husband or children. The lack of connection between the vacant eyes and the knitting hands wasn't explained at all. I imagined there had to be something beyond generosity and self-sacrifice, something as blind and automatic as the action itself. It was darker in the compartment now, and her face was still and pale. Then her impassive gaze wasn't fixed on the soft red seat any longer but on the girl sitting in it. I glanced at the girl. She was about eighteen, floppy and listless, and chewed gum. A vague instability showed in every movement of her face. Her eyes were vacant as well, but readable, and if she had spoken I could have verified my predictions as to what she would say and how she would say it. This contrast made the woman's inert eyes even more puzzling. They didn't have that vague instability, they were—I was about to say—at rest, but only the eyes of the dead are at rest, and something lived on in those I was looking at. I had the feeling now, wrongly perhaps, that she must

know all there was to know about living, not in long words—she probably couldn't say it in words at all—but just in not feeling incongruous or out of place any more. Suddenly I felt very small. You're always on about looking for the truth underneath thick encrustations of hypocrisy and thousands of years of talk piled up and solidified like layers of wallpaper, I told myself, but this unreadable face with the dispassionate, unblinking eyes has got there already, and can't understand why you're straining and heaving through the mud and slime too blind and full of big words and phrases to see the dry land she's sitting on. Very dry. Not warm and comfortable and idyllic, but at least very dry.

The train was speeding away from the sun now. I could see the red glow in the sky far behind. I got from my seat and walked past the other passengers to the sliding door at the end of the compartment, stepped out into the narrow space where the bellows joining the carriages together were rattling and shuddering, and slid the door to behind me. It was cold now and the overlapping footplates in the bellows were jarring against each other viciously and deafeningly. I lit a cigarette, went to the open window, and looked back down the long track towards the sun. I stood there for a long time and watched it drop slowly until it was swallowed up into the shadow. It was like looking back down the interminable track of time towards the cold, silent beginning of things. Women had been there then as well. I imagined them sitting in the dark caves, and giving birth to children the same way as they do now, and I supposed they must have had the same sort of eyes as those I'd been looking at in the compartment. Nobody called that generosity or self-sacrifice, those were just words which had come much later, thousands of years later, and covered up the simple things and made men feel warm and secure in the knowledge that there were good things like generosity and self-sacrifice to be had even if they had no immediate use for them.

Words might have given us the power to explain things away, but they hadn't given us the right to do so. These early people had left us just a few hunched up heaps of bones and flint knick-knacks to let us know that they'd ever been there at all. They'd had their way of living and they'd prostrated themselves before their gods of fire and thunder and sunlight, and now they didn't care whether we still worshipped the same gods or whether we had some new ones, and why should they? When we came across one of their ancient, flattened skulls in a cool, marble-floored museum the hollow cavities where their eyes had once sat were as empty and enigmatic as the boundless, black vacuum of space that waited patiently for the shiny, inquisitive noses of our rockets to come sniffing it out. The time-stained, pitted cavities told us nothing, nothing at all. We sifted the facts and finds and wrote stories about them, strange, unbelievable stories, gave them faces and put them in glossy books in full colour, and thought about them just now and then when we had nothing else to do. A little over a hundred years ago they'd caused a lot of trouble. Some clergymen said they

weren't really there at all, some said they'd been strewn around by the Devil to lead people away from the truth, and later on some used them as an object-lesson and a warning and told people that they would have been like that without the grace of God, so that when people looked at themselves in the mirror while they were combing their hair or tying their cravats they felt pleased with themselves and decided that this grace of God was a good thing to have. But when I imagined them I saw the women stretching the skins of hunted animals to keep their children warm, and I saw them doing it in the same way that the woman in the compartment was knitting clothes for her children, and in their eyes I seemed to see the same timeless look that could laugh at what we called civilisation because it was deeper and more constant and knowing. And still they told us nothing, except perhaps that now it was our turn. Words had made us clever, very clever.

I finished the cigarette and tossed the glowing stub out into the darkness where the cold rush of air snatched it away greedily and obliterated it. Then I went back to my seat in the compartment, where the lights were now on and some people were reading novels and evening papers. It all looked very normal, as if it had nothing to do with the night outside and the sun sinking over the edge of the world. This is our new world, I said to myself, the absorbing and all too familiar world of electricity and controlled power, clothes made in factories, newspapers and things made of glass, metal, plastic and polished wood. You can live in this new world day after day, surround yourself with it, let it buoy you up, carry you effortlessly along and slowly rock you to sleep with the friendly smile of its omnipresent symbols. Then you can forget about the night outside. Two women were buttoning up their coats and taking their bags and cases down from the luggage rack. "She's been doing it for so long now that she's got used to it," one said to the other, "but I always take mine down the Laundrette myself. Well, you might as well, mightn't you? Saves all that scrubbing and everything." A fat, tired city-man in a pin-striped suit was yawning and reaching for his briefcase, and a soldier was standing up stiffly clipping his webbed belt round his uniform and stamping the creases out of his khaki trousers. The train was clattering through the suburbs, only minutes away from the station. The passengers standing in the gangway held on to the ends of the seats and luggage racks as the train lurched and staggered across a network of line-junctions, and then jerked their suitcases clumsily towards the exit-doors as the carriages fumbled after each other into the station. They all looked rather tired and irritable, as if they were annoyed with the train for making a point of buffeting them about as much as it could. Everybody seemed to be getting in everybody else's way, and that made them even more irritable, and me as well.

I think I must have forgotten pretty quickly about the fascinating eyes, the night outside and the dawn of history, because when I left the station all I was thinking about was a big plate of sausages and chips and a pint of bitter, so perhaps it wasn't very important anyway.

DAVE FRAMPTON.

*Poems by :-*

P. J. Hooker

## Invitation to walk Among Beasts

Walk in the huge skull of night.  
Stars are nails puncturing  
the tall dome. Lights scab the wounds  
and point a way along the bone ribbons  
of the town.

The yellow clock looks down.

Laughing drunks complain  
and leave the night to cats.  
Rest at the feet of the clock.

Where are the words that name  
our savage hurts and hurting hands,  
beasts that breed in human eyes  
and wear the flesh of innocence?

Come no nearer on such a night  
than half-questions in sleepy voices.  
A fine wind and noises of the street  
distract.  
Too much pain is impossible.

Focus three stars in the window  
and breathe quietly. You say the beasts  
are exiled and the swamps cleared.  
Now might a man be unafraid  
to wear his body like a suit  
and pace the world without a gun.  
Your dreams are full of fun.

Dawn opens like a smiling mouth  
and birds fly out to shout  
among the trees.

Wake in the safe arms of a small bed.

## Whitman in the Suburbs

You stride the pockmarked gravel paths  
to little houses tonsured by green lawns.  
We sit you in the kitchen, bring cocoa  
with a bun, dismiss gruff thanks with  
what a dreadful day. Hands stifle yawns,  
slap kids who think that tramps are fun.  
Parents knit it in our heads that kindness  
is the thing to do. Here's a coat ted wore  
to decorate the den.

You say

once when you beckoned men would  
follow, wear sky on their shoulders  
like a cloak, Thankyou but we know our parts.  
Goodbye shut the door watch the dog latch the gate.

The latch falls on our hearts.

## Still Life

Ringed and wrinkled fingers rub  
the soil in bowls of early plants, and  
from her window chair the words are  
hesitant and quiet as the voice  
of twilight rooms and tea cups on dull  
afternoons.

His pale hand  
weaves harsh phrases on the sunday lull.  
Only the old and fools can hold such views.  
She smiles and listens to the noise  
of weary birds, dreaming in the thickets  
of the woods.

The plump executive pushed back  
his files, smoothed polished hair  
and frowned.

A smile  
pecked at the engine in his head.  
His pale hand gestured with despair.

## Words

I spent them like a prodigal  
to snatch brief sketches of the world,  
spark approbation in a stranger's eye  
and kindle talk in failing mouths,  
the serious and profane. The price  
is dear we pay to purchase ease  
from childish blemishes.  
Not one was saved.

Passed from hand to hand  
they lose that primal warmth, become  
dull coins to furnish other people's  
songs. Will do today to turn a rhyme  
tomorrow as a way of wasting time.  
All, all are squandered now.

I did not know my fortune's worth  
when first I heard the treasure ring  
but like a rake, the younger son  
went on the spree and flung  
my gold about the town, to finish  
here at twenty-one with silences  
like leeches on my wounds.

The wornout coins are shaken down  
in ritual. The pulse insists and still  
the injured heart bleeds  
like a frightened animal that has  
no hiding place but finds  
the shadow of a wall imagined peace.  
Vague and speechless are the terms of hurt.

## The Bhagavad Gita

Translated by Juan Mascaro; published by Penguin Books, 3/6.

TO an increasing number of people the *Bhagavad Gita* needs no introduction. It has been for over two thousand years the central book of Hinduism, and since its first translation in the late eighteenth century it has been a source of inspiration to many Europeans. Hegel translated it into Latin, it greatly influenced Schopenhaur, Sir Edwin Arnold translated it as *The Song Celestial*, and in our own day men such as T. S. Eliot and Aldous Huxley have paid tribute to it. The Gita's appeal to men is literally that of life itself, for far more than any novel it is a mirror to Nature in which all the conflicting and multitudinous quality of life is transformed into harmony and unity. As Mr. Mascaro says in his introduction,

"The greatness of the *Bhagavad Gita* is the greatness of the Universe; but even as the wonder of the stars in heaven only reveals itself in the silence of the night, the wonder of this poem only reveals itself in the silence of the soul."

Fundamentally religious teachers all have the same simple message, that "The Kingdom of God is within you." This was Christ's message, the Buddha's, Krishna's and that of all great teachers. But in time the message is distorted, men fail to grasp it in all its simplicity, and orthodoxy casts a veil over it, while the simple, direct experience of going within the Being in the "I am" is obscured by intellectualism and the concern with Becoming. All great experiences, of whatever form, give us this sense of Being; they do take us out of ourselves, but lead us into our deeper Selves, the silence of awareness. T. S. Eliot says,

"We had the experience but missed the meaning  
And approach to the meaning restores the experience  
In a different form, beyond any meaning  
We can assign to happiness."

We go all out for the experience, happiness, but ignore its meaning completely. The result is a sense of duality, the myth of the isolated individual shivering in a hostile universe, of man and God as distinct entities separated by a vast gulf, while in fact the whole universe is a manifestation of God: it is a cosmos, a unity.

In this way Christ's teaching degenerated into complex mythology and abstruse speculation, producing Calvinism on the one hand and the Inquisition on the other, both surely a long way from the Sermon on the Mount. Duality has been in Christianity from the earliest times, and in spite of many attempts to cut through to the truth it has never been absent. Because of this many Westerners, and especially in the last fifty years, have turned away from the New Testament to the great books of the East, the Buddhist Sutras, the *Tao TeChing*, The Upanishads and the *Bhagavad Gita*. They have the same teaching as the



Bible, but being so fresh and untouched as far as the West is concerned, one can see and learn much more clearly.

The *Bhagavad Gita* is included in an immensely long epic, the *Mahabharata*. It is a dialogue between Krishna, the incarnation of God and Arjuna, a noble warrior, where Krishna elaborates on action, the renunciation of action and the fruits of both. The scene is appropriately on a field of battle, of all human actions the hardest to accept, where the armies of two rival bands of brothers are preparing to fight. Arjuna seeing his kin in both armies fears that nothing but evil can come of such a battle. He has a vision of universal disruption resulting from his actions, and his weapons fall from his hands in desperation.

In answer to Arjuna's despair Krishna says,

"The wise grieve not for the living and the dead, for life and death shall pass away, because we have been for all time; I and thou and those Kings of men. And we shall all be for all time, we all for ever and ever. As the spirit of our mortal body wanders on in childhood and youth and old age, the Spirit wanders on to a new body; of this the sage has no doubts . . . the unreal never is; the Real never is not. This truth indeed has been seen by those who see the true . . . For all things born in truth must die, and out of death in truth comes life. Face to face with what must be, cease thou from sorrow."

Immediately everything appears in a new light. What Arjuna fears he will destroy is indestructible, only subject to the laws of change of which he finds himself an unwilling agent. His enemies are destined to be defeated at his hand, but their apparent destruction is only another change in their experience. Men change, passing through the cycles of birth and death, the manifest and the unmanifest, and yet they are ever changeless. The attributes change, the field changes, but the Knower, the "I am" is ever still. This is the major theme of the *Upanishads* where the question continually asked is "What art thou?" Man is whittled away until all that remains is "I am." He cannot even say "I think therefore I am" for reasoning power is as much an attribute as everything else; instead he says "I am that I am."

The consciousness in man is the consciousness which moves the whole universe. Mr. Mascaro says in his introduction :

"Even as the rational mind can see that all matter is energy, the spirit can see that all energy is love, and everything in creation can be a mathematical equation for the mind and a song of love for the soul."

It is the love of Dante's final vision :

"L'amor che move il sole e l'atre stelle."

This is the essence of the *Bhagavad Gita*, for we always come back to it and it is in everything touched on in the poem. In the last chapter all the strings are drawn together, of action and contemplation, the path of eternity and rebirth, the three natures of man, and behind it all there is love.

"When the vision of reason is clear, and in steadiness the soul is in harmony; when the world of sound and other senses is gone, and

the spirit has risen above passion and hate; when a man dwells in the solitude of silence, and meditation and contemplation are ever with him, then this man has risen on the mountain of the Highest; he is worthy to be one with Brahman, with God. He is one with Brahman, and beyond grief and desire his soul is in peace. His love is one for all creation; By love he knows me in truth, who I am and what I am. And when he knows me in truth he enters into my Being. In whatever work he does he can take refuge in me, and he attains then by my grace the imperishable home of Eternity."

"In whatever work he does he can take refuge in me." Here is the theme of action put very simply. The word *Karma*, action, also means the law of cause and effect, and holy work, sacrifice. In fact, they are as one. All action, even the renunciation of action is a form of prayer, with results beyond the apparent ones. Man is a divine soul, but through his very nature and through his past actions he is bound to action. If, as in all else, he identifies himself with his action the result will be bondage and misery. Instead, resting in the peace of the Atman, his own Being, he should carry out what is before him to do without seeking to avoid it, and not concerned with the results of it, for all holy work is sacrifice.

"The man who in his work finds silence, and who sees that silence is work, this man in truth sees the Light and in all his works finds peace. He whose undertakings are free from anxious desire and fanciful thought, whose work is made pure in the fire of wisdom, he is called wise by those who see. Know that all sacrifice is holy work, and knowing this thou shalt be free."

The way to freedom is not through the avoidance of action, for that is as bad as action done in ignorance, but to the consecration of action, for in the light of Brahman action and contemplation are as one.

The Way of the *Bhagavad Gita* is as easy as you wish it. If a man wants to follow the path of austerity, mortification and denial of the world, he is free to do so, and so is the man who in the fullness of experience sees God in everything and everything resting in the silence of God, for as all rivers flow into the sea all paths lead to the same point.

This present translation is the latest of many translations into English. The difficulty of the task is hard to appreciate, since few people know the original, although comparisons with other versions can help. It was written in highly condensed couplets, where very often the meaning can only be rendered in English in a paraphrase of several lines. Mr. Mascaro falls too easily into the habit of using biblical language which seems to attract many translators of religious classics. The Authorised Version is the masterpiece of English prose, but imitations of it often sound mawkish and meaningless. In comparison with the translation of Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood, Mr. Mascaro's does tend towards vagueness, although elsewhere he avoids the almost clinical coldness of their version.

The introduction is very valuable, for in less than thirty pages he is able to give the background of Indian thought in the *Upanishads* and the *Vedas*, as well as an introduction to the Gita, and throughout he bases it on Western thinkers and poets, quoting from Homer, St. Teresa, Dante and Keats among others. He gives the poem a broad foundation to help us accept it better, but does not belittle by bringing it down to our level.

No translation is perfect; if it were there would not be so many of the Gita. But each new one helps us to understand this great poem, possibly, if greatness can be measured, the greatest of all religious poems, and besides as Krishna says :

"A man should not abandon his work even if he cannot achieve in it full perfection; because in all work there may be imperfection even as in all fire there is smoke."

R. M. BATEMAN.

## *Poems by*

Terry Holmes

### The Puzzlement of the Inquisition

We see some holed with iron traps;  
Their wounds are fresh work from the cell,  
The craft of tools, who snore below,  
Recovering from wreaking hell.

Our science is exact and deft.  
Pain that clutches outer life  
Reaches on into the skull,  
Coruscations of the knife

Flash behind alerted eyes.  
But one was blinded with a hook,  
Was thus inscrutable; we winced  
Before his torn unmeaning look.

We cannot scan such rough mistakes  
They are insistent and derange  
Philosophies, and violate  
Our own repose with torture's change

## Panzer Officers Training

Attacks are governed from the minds  
Of men in business-like field-grey,  
Embattled in the peaceful lanes  
In which they skulk, a world away  
Through eyes like cold unblinking stars,  
That fasten on some distant prey.

Their battle traced on arrowed maps,  
Is fast, allows no standing still.  
Their racing minds display at once  
An energy refined to skill,  
Whose exercise is in the choice,  
Retained until they choose to kill.

The countryside accepts their gear  
As legend, antique pawns to score  
Exact success of someone's move.  
But with the craftsman, tanks are more  
Than trappings, they are heraldry  
Of poised, immensely ready war.

## Revenge on Earth

Into the dark, without a head,  
Lurching furtively : I am possessed.  
My hands, in formal outrage, share the bed.

I know already how our bandits die,  
And still the valleys get my fire, smoke  
Ascends to pattern meaning in the sky,

And startle into rage the violence  
Concomitant upon my lawless vice.  
Brother and father, cursing out of sense,

Course my night in dreams of hot pursuit.  
Alone and breathless, caught on terror's edge,  
My knowledge of the dark is absolute.

## Balloon-head

HE was a small, spindly little boy with an enormous head. His skinny arms seemed to dangle from his roomy clothes even when he was standing still and his walk was a funny, gangling lope. But strangest of all this enormous head which would have done credit to a child prodigy or even a fully-fledged genius, was absolutely chock-a-block full of nothingness.

This peculiarity was first recognised at home where he would sit at tea, knife and fork poised over an empty plate, just staring at the edge of a framed photograph of his maternal grandfather hung directly opposite his chair, until someone noticed and nudged him or helped him to bread and butter. Little by little it was discovered that he did this everywhere; at music lessons, in Sunday School or at parties. He just sat and stared into space, said nothing and did nothing. And one morning his mother said, as she stood at the sink washing dishes :

"You've a balloon-head, my lad, and if you're not very careful, it'll burst!" He'd seen that happen to balloons at Christmas or on Birthdays and horrified by the thought, contracted a mortal fear of pins, so great that if his mother was sewing he would sit outside on the step and refuse to come in until she had finished. The sight of a ball of wool, pierced by two great knitting pins positively transfixed him with terror and his worst nightmares were of being chased by a jeering horde of professional balloon-bursters.

It wasn't that he never had a thought but just that the few he had would have been called silly and so he didn't bother to tell anybody; like wondering why birds never flew upside-down, or if you couldn't straighten out the curls in smoke, or if stinging nettles really wouldn't sting if you grasped them hard like they said. Sometimes he would go into the fields determined to have a good think, but invariably he would end up sticking blades of grass between his bare toes and trying to make the ants jump over his finger instead of crawl. He did other things too. He had heard that you couldn't fold a piece of paper more than eight times, but that if you did, with a few more folds you could reach the moon. So he thought if he took six sheets of tissue paper and stuck them together with flour and water paste, maybe he could reach the moon and have it all to himself, to sit on and stare without anyone to ask him why. Ten times the paper went over, twice more than they said it could, but it didn't even reach the ceiling, so he threw the paper away and went to sit on the step for an hour.

But all these goings-on worried the grown-ups considerably and not only Balloon-head's parents but his teacher, Miss Jenkins. When his habit of sitting and staring at the wall or the back of the person in front was noticed Miss Jenkins moved him to the front because she suspected he was short-sighted or deaf. And there he was only too

conspicuous. Visitors to the class always singled him out for their question, "And which lesson do you like best?" and to the teacher's great embarrassment his answer, as he slowly turned a far-away gaze on the visitor, was always "Oh . . . nothing," which usually meant the grown-up left that particular classroom rather sooner than had been intended. On other occasions the teacher, distracted by Balloon-head's obvious inattention, would ask him what he was thinking and would receive such a jumbled assortment of half-thoughts and idle fancies that, quite incapable of comment, she wished she had not pressed for an answer.

It must be admitted, too, that this nothing was sometimes very disturbing even to Balloon-head. When he was tired, for instance, the nothing got heavy and then swelled and swelled in his head until he thought it would burst of its own accord. Just as bad were the phantoms he saw before falling asleep. When he closed his eyes a strange war took place in his brain between the roaring armies of two opposing camps, the one composed of fat men with great swollen heads on squat, bulbous bodies from which protruded roly-poly arms and legs, the other of terrifyingly thin and tall men, bodies like lean pencils and with ten skinny fingers on each hand.

As Balloon-head grew older so his condition worsened. Sometimes he would stop in his tracks as he walked along a pavement and stare at the moss growing between the slabs, or on a rainy day stand for hours in the gutter with his gum boots on, just watching the water with its cargo of flotsam and jetsam swirl around his feet and gurgle down the drain. And he hardly heard the words of people about him which seemed to float like disconnected notes of music in the air and never touch him.

And the boys at school got jealous because they could not penetrate his private world. So one terrible day they planned a joke on Balloon-head. With thin cardboard they fashioned a giant knitting needle, coating it with aluminium paint, and then crept up on the unsuspecting Balloon-head as he lay in a meadow near the school, his eyes shut and absorbed by the patterns in his head, the still pools of water covered with lilies that the rest of us only see when we press our hands hard against our eyes. And standing over him, the boys held the great needle poised, then one of them called his name softly, "Balloon-head." He opened his eyes and saw, as if in a nightmare, the great needle coming towards him and the terror filled his head and his body and grew huger and huger until it was too big for the little body and burst it.

And then the boys saw the strangest, most wonderful thing. Balloon-head's gawky body just blew away like a few charred pieces of paper, but out of his head, full of nothing, rose a cloud of tiny flakes of gold, so light that they rose straight into the air and up, up towards the sky, glittering in the sun so brightly that the boys had to hide their eyes, and when they next looked, they were gone.

Yet that was not the end of Balloon-head. On a dark, starfilled night, if you look long and hard enough between the stars, you will see slowly appearing those very same flakes of gold, and if you concentrate as hard as you can, in some place far from the noise of traffic in a big, open field with the grass beneath your feet, you will hear the gentle tinkle of the flakes of gold as they brush against each other, just like the distant murmur of a stream.

MARION CALLEN.

## Love Now: Pay Later

I dreamt I dwelt in Marble Arch  
The rents were rather high.  
I wore no clothes, except for those  
I'd never had to buy.

One night I met a lady;  
Her style was—oh so—grand,  
Mink coats galore, and even more  
Diamonds on her hand.

Our love was quite immediate,  
And it grew from day to day.  
We'd wine and dine, and many a time  
We'd pleasure the night away.

With presents she besieged me  
And I became well-dressed.  
The door would ring, and in they'd bring  
More finery of the best.

Her kindness was amazing;  
So was her gratitude.  
She paid my bills, and revealed such skills  
As made *me* feel a prude.

And then an idea struck me :—  
Preserve this perfect state!  
I'd give my life to banish strife,  
Become her faithful mate.

These plans she acquiesced in.  
Such happiness we'd share.  
The book we'd sign, she would be mine,  
Making legal our affair.

The fateful day was chosen—  
The rehearsals all were done.  
The banns thrice read, we two were wed;  
The picnic had begun.

She wore the ring I purchased  
For quite a moderate price.  
At secondhand the little band  
Had been a widow's twice.

But the picnic was ill-fated.  
Our joy away soon sped.  
The wedding night my bride took flight,  
Leaving her debts instead.

For the Devil repossessed her;  
Made her Queen of Satanic kind.  
She inhabits Hell; so might I as well  
For the weight that's on my mind.

For what is more distressing  
Besides an errant wife  
Than the prospect of hard labour  
and H.P. debts for life?

MICK MILLER.



## The Divorce

HE stood watching the rain falling in the dirty yellow light of one of the old street lamps. The lamps stretched endlessly up the street throwing their light on the monotony of terraces whose hard functional outlines seemed to stand out in the dark. There were no soft lines : no curves or trees, only the endless street and the grey black city sky.

He took the whisky bottle from his coat pocket, removed the cork and had a long drink. The spirit burned down his throat and into his belly, temporarily shutting out the filthy night. The cork went back into the bottle. Then he had second thoughts : removed it again, lifted the bottle to his lips and emptied it. For a long time he held the bottle in front of his face and stared at its emptiness, then he lobbed it onto the road and laughed as it shattered on the tarmac. The gutter was a torrent of black water covered in foam and he watched it as it was gulped down by the drain.

The misery of the night entered him and he felt cold and wet inside. It seemed to be raining inside his head and the water cascading down through his mouth full of filth and air bubbles. He felt suddenly very sick and vomited into the gutter. The mess splashed into the water and was carried down the drain. He stood there for a while watching it, shaking his head and spitting.

He wanted another drink but the whisky was all gone. There was only the glass fragments in the road and the smell in the gutter. Helplessly, he stared at the glass and then turned and began walking up the street. His legs were not working properly and he swayed from side to side across the narrow pavement before bumping into a wall and stopping. He lifted his head and saw the grey black sky. His hands began to tingle and he could not breathe. He gulped at the dirty air in panic and tried to walk; he had to get air. He took a step forwards and the world spun about him and became impenetrably black. He fell and knocked his head against a doorstep. A banging started at the back of his head, just above the tip of his spine. It got louder and louder and faster and faster until it burst into his brain and flooded across his eyes.

How long he lay there before the figure appeared he did not know, but he became conscious of it standing above him on the doorstep, framed in a warm, orange light. The warmth of it seemed to touch upon his misery, and then as soon as it had touched, to withdraw, leaving him even more miserable. He wanted to cry but the tears were in his belly and would not come up. The figure began to talk and the noise set the air around his head vibrating. He raised his head and the figure became three and then one again and then back to three. He wanted to focus but the figure kept dividing and joining so rapidly that he could not catch it whole. Exhausted, he rested his head on his arms and closed his eyes. The blackness spun in a vast circle around his head, then the whole system tipped violently on its axis.

Things became softer and warmer; it had stopped raining and the blackness had stopped revolving; now it hung in front of his eyes, it seemed to stay there forever. He looked into it and it went back; the more he looked the further it receded. Then suddenly it jumped back and came right up to him.

He opened his eyes and the day came at him, crisp and clean. Everything was cut sharp and hard. The dimensions flew out at him and he seemed imprisoned in a mass of the inanimate—all polished sharp and hard. A woman opened a door and a blast of cold air struck his face. His eyes opened wider and he stared at the woman—just lay there and stared with his mouth open. The woman stood and looked at him, looked, not stared; a smile flickered on her lips, then, as if realising its mistake, slipped off again. The woman lowered her eyes and for a brief moment looked at the carpet, then her eyes came back to him. They were now hard and resolute.

"Would you like some coffee?"

The word "coffee" went round and round inside his head before it clicked into his consciousness. He became confused. How could he react to a question about coffee? His mind went backwards and forwards as if looking for an answer. His head nodded; it was not quite a reflex action.

The woman went out and he turned over and buried his head in his arms. He wanted to cry again but his inside was dry. His belly felt empty and in the emptiness there started a pain which spread through the rest of his body. A pain which was a sort of consciousness of his empty belly.

The coffee came: it was hot and sweet. The woman sat opposite him; once she started to fidget but controlled herself almost at once. She concentrated on drinking her coffee as if it were a very difficult task. She never raised her eyes to him. He stared at her, his coffee cup still full on the arm of the chair. His eyes tried to communicate the pain that was in him, the loneliness that had been there for months now eating away at him. Only drink did anything for it and that did not stop it unless he blacked out, it only helped him forget why he had it and that was sometimes worse. His thoughts were racing, torn from their lethargy of grief by a rising hope. This was the chance, the hope, nothing could be so unkind. He wanted to tell her without using words, somehow to go straight to her and by-pass her consciousness. He stared and stared, his face becoming involuntarily distorted in an effort to communicate.

He realised it was hopeless he would have to use words, have to go to her mind and then she would remember. She would know him as she knew him, not as he was. He had to tell her, had to start.

"Sorry."

She looked up and the civilisation of a smile flicked on and off her lips. She hesitated for some time before she spoke and it seemed to him like a very long time. Then she mouthed emptiness at him—just words.

"That's alright, happens sometimes."

She was blank, dead to him. He thought that she must be surrounded by a glass case of respectability labelled "Store in a very cool place," but very quickly the bitterness was replaced by the loneliness again and he sat there; a worn, wet human male trying to get through to this woman. The loneliness had got a lot worse and the hope a lot less. He became exhausted, overcome once more by the all-pervading lethargy of grief. His pain was the pain of separation; it really had very little to do with love: he had lived in one way for twenty years and now it had changed. He wanted to explain to her but it was too early for explanations; he had to establish a link.

Her coffee cup was empty and she just sat there looking at her feet. He knew then that he could never get through. She was a complete stranger entirely without interest in him.

He took his eyes from her and looked at the ceiling; it was pure white and looked very cold.

"Thank you very much."

Her eyes came up; they were like glass and there was nothing behind them.

He picked up his coat and went out into the street.

SID MINCHIN.

*Poems by*

P. W. A. Banham

**Apocalypse**

Here is the old ground, familiar to the view,  
the paths well-trodden, broad, and leading straight  
to others, where, again well-cyphered, you  
continue, continue again to nothing new.  
These are the old thoughts, worn smooth  
by constant handling, tried and labelled true;  
one knows the way around. Such a fact  
makes plain that you can do only  
one thing in a given situation.  
Old stamping grounds; few obstacles for the feet  
to stumble on. Even the hand-grips are strong—  
the blind by such could drag themselves along.  
These are the old people, you know them too.  
All having their particular vices, but, as far  
as you can see, comforting because  
you know they'll be discreet, tell  
the same lies in the same ways well.  
And these people are the poor; rely  
on them. Eventually they buy (at the prices  
you afford) all the bric-a-brac you want to sell.  
Now, in such a world, imagine  
one mornings wakening, catching unawares  
the paths, the thoughts, and those you  
had called friends. Where you once  
trod a jungle blooms, defies one  
single recognisable object. People that  
you meet, unexpectedly, in isolated clearings,  
stare, some insolently throw  
you pennies, and when questioned  
all give incomprehensible answers.  
This sort of thing would be unbearable,  
as such considered a nightmare.  
But now imagine, if in a single day, you  
found this was the real apocalypse.  
What would you do? Stay, as a beggar,  
or rise and leave the country?

## Growing Old

This morning we have spoken of the sorrow  
and the pain of growing old;  
the rain on the window has been  
tears of nature, who, causing our pain,  
can still weep with us.  
Now the sun shines again  
and we have seen the blossom  
falling from the cherry-tree.  
And even now we do not believe.

## An Image of Sisyphus

YOU walk down the hall and you hear a clacking noise; a typewriter, you say to yourself. The noise comes from the back room. You open the door and step inside. The room is small, square and sparsely furnished. The only window is boarded up. The man typing is sitting at a small table. There is neither ribbon nor paper on the typewriter. His fingers move very fast. A series of shallow grooves has been worn on the roller of the machine. A pile of dusty paper is stacked beside it.

You have made no noise coming in and the man does not look up; you might as well not exist. You cross the room to the opposite corner so that you are looking approximately along the line of his shoulders. He is wearing heavy gloves and dark glasses, and the room is warm and dimly lit. He continues typing. His crouch over the machine suggests to you that he is concentrating on his work, and his slight frown tends to confirm your judgment.

Gradually his rate of typing decreases, like a toy aeroplane when the rubber band is nearly unwound. Eventually he ceases altogether, and hunches in his chair, looking exhausted and satisfied. Getting up, he moves across the room to a large armchair, sits down in it, and turns the light out by means of a switch fastened to the arm. His breathing becomes slow and regular, and you wonder if he is asleep; possibly—even probably.

His rest is not very long, for you have the impression that before much time has elapsed he has switched the light on and is moving around; you follow his actions with interest. Almost at once he squats down on the floor; placing his gloved thumbs and his forefingers together with the tips of each pair touching so as to form an irregular diamond, he rests the thumbs on the floor, the apex of the figure pointing straight at the ceiling; then, bringing his left thumb up to join the linked forefingers, and immediately afterwards raising his left forefinger vertically, he outlines an S; swiftly the right thumb joins the left thumb and right forefinger and straightaway the right forefinger rises to the left one, and the original shape is reformed, one diamond-height above the floor. As the movements continue, the alternating diamonds and S-shapes leave the floor behind and approach the ceiling. His face is split by a broad, happy

grin; he must know that this is only a pretended trial of strength, and he enjoys it as such, as an actor enjoys incarnating a character without seriously imagining that he is anyone but himself.

But just as an actor is still disappointed when his performance—which he knows is only a game—is unsuccessful, so the man is evidently frustrated by his inability to reach his chosen goal, and he immediately sits down at the typewriter and works hard for some time; finally, exhausted, he returns to the armchair and switches out the light again.

Your life and the man's continue in the same way: you in the corner watching and he alternately sitting in the armchair, typing, and trying to reach the ceiling. In general the events follow the same pattern; except that on some occasions you cannot help feeling that his trial of strength takes on more importance than on others; his smile fades a little as he seems to become increasingly aware of the futility of his efforts to reach the ceiling. These flashes of consciousness are invariably followed by almost frenzied periods of work at the typewriter.

These crises reach a culminating point: the smile which accompanied his gloved hands towards the ceiling has changed to a frown of perplexity. He no longer seems sure whether this trial of strength is pretended or genuine, and prolonged typing seemingly does nothing to restore his balance of mind. He often eyes the pile of dusty paper lying beside the typewriter.

Then, following an attempt when the gloves themselves seem aware of their inability to reach the ceiling, he sits down at the typewriter. Hesitantly, he fits a ribbon and rolls some paper into the machine. He begins to type; fast at first, then more slowly. An incoherent jumble of letters and signs has appeared. Confronted by this evidence of his presence at writing, he is overcome and sits staring at the paper. Eventually, shakily, and warily watching the keyboard and the roller of the machine, he starts again: a short while ago I don't know how long ago do I wish I knew how long ago? the electricity ran out and when I went to put a shilling in the meter I could feel the coin through my glove and I wondered what it would feel like if I took my glove off and I didn't have the courage . . .

The typing stops and he appears to reflect, and your heart beats a little faster as you wonder what his decision will be. He takes off his dark glasses in a jerky, hesitant movement, and places them on the table. As if pulling out one of his own teeth, he gradually draws his glove off his right hand; the hand remains suspended, naked, over the table. Beside the gloved left hand it looks stupid and rather obscene; the flesh gives the impression of being viscous and flaccid to the touch, and he eyes it with faint disgust; its shape seems nebulous, like an amoeba watched through a microscope.

The hand interposes itself directly between your line of vision and the dark wood of the table, and its appearance alters; against this background it seems hard and purposeful, the long fingers clearly defined and prehensile. Now it is the table which by contrast looks vaguely repulsive. The wood has a dull sheen which repels the gaze and which seems to

emanate in rays in the same way as one can imagine infection emanating from a leper. He is forcing the hand down onto the surface of the table, the corners of his mouth twisted down in apprehension. You feel mildly sick at the idea of the hand pressing against this disgusting presence. The hand approaches even nearer and your heart turns a little. The hand rests on the table, you no longer feel nausea, just mild curiosity, as you ponder the meaning of the serene smile curling the line of his lips . . . the table feels pleasant to the touch.

He is standing up, and he moves across the room to the boarded-up window. Resting his hand on the planks, he smiles gently and starts to stroke the wood, softly, lightly. He moves away from the window, and, going to the mantelpiece, picks up the little clock and caresses it between his two hands. He is still smiling and you can feel his smile reflected on your own face. The smile changes to a slight frown when he notices that the clock has no hands, but the moment of annoyance is of short duration. For some time he moves around the room palpating the chair, fondling a book-end, leaning against the wall, pressing himself into it, as if trying to impregnate himself with its presence. Finally he stands in the middle of the room, his eyelids half lowered, his mouth curving gently in a contented smile; you have an intimation of the satisfaction his discovery of the concrete world must be giving him. He seems tired, and soon he sinks into the armchair and switches the light out.

He rests longer than usual this time, and, switching the light on, he appears slightly at a loss; he blinks and fumbles and puts his glove and dark glasses back on. The gentle contentment which preceded his rest has disappeared and left only puzzling and slightly disgusting memories; you remember the smooth, white hand poised over the dark emanations of the table, and you sympathise with his state of mind. Unable to know whether his contentment was real or imagined, real and temporary, or even permanent, he returns to what is real, and tries to reach the ceiling. Slowly the gloved diamonds and S-shapes climb, but only to reach their apex some few inches too low. Secure in the knowledge that this at least is just as it used to be, he feels able to try to touch the table again. Once more the equivocal whiteness of the hand slides out of the glove; and a distasteful look comes over his face. Persevering, he approaches the table; but to no avail. The presence of the dark, dull wood is overpowering, and the sheen which rises slowly and irresistibly from it somehow lifts the pale, impotent hand in its current. The air seems tense to you: it is the psychological strain that he is undergoing communicating itself to you, or are the resistances set up by the objects in the room as readily apprehensible to you as to him? No matter; you and he are sharing this feeling.

The clock, the window and the wall all have this strangely repellent air about them; it is not something which produces the physical sensation of sickness, but a certain quality which demands a respectful distance, which produces unhappiness rather than nausea. He is forcing himself to go on trying, but it is impossible.

Giving up, he thankfully pulls on his glove and his dark glasses, and sits down at the typewriter; the ribbon and paper are still in it. He rips them out and starts to type, very fast and very hard. But the memory of the meaningless jumble on the sheet and the subsequent experience of the concrete disturb his work and his train of thought, and he is unable to continue.

The ceiling seems to beckon; it is no longer a square or dull white plaster, but a haven, a mountain-top. He squats on the floor, and the gloved diamond outlines itself before him, and climbs slowly towards the ceiling, and stops just short; and yet he no longer seems frustrated, and an equivocal smile is sketched across his mouth: perhaps one day, you think, even if only in the imagination, the gloved fingers will feel the soft caress of the ceiling. And as you look at the praying hands, you wonder: whose hands are they—his or yours?

JEREMY N. J. PALMER,  
November, 1961.

## Statehood for Britain?

FEELING has reached a new height throughout the country as the time approaches when Britain must decide her fate—existence as an independent country facing possible aggression or statehood and prosperous co-existence. Although the American offer of statehood came as a surprise, evidence of a plan had been known to the British Government when agents accidentally discovered the existence of an American Subversive Activities Committee, established to undermine British culture. The plan called for the propagation of the American way of life in Britain until the average citizen would consider himself an American. This subsequent change of loyalties would make the offer of statehood seem natural.

Before citizens could be alerted to the threat, America announced her new foreign policy, Survival '62, and promised bigger and better foreign aid to underdeveloped countries. The threat was not realised until an unrequested load of missiles and food parcels arrived with the explanation that the missiles were "to keep the country safe for democracy" and the food packages were to keep the men alive to man the missiles. Although the House of Lords hurriedly declined the offer the missiles and food arrived with the explanation that peerage is an "undemocratic foundation for authority" and the refusal could not be accepted as "representing the will of the people." Failure to stop the setting-up of the missile bases is blamed on a strike in the sign industry which had agreed to supply citizens with signs reading C.N.D. and Go Home Yank.

The Americans were more subtle and effective in the next step of their plan which called for the conversion of University students to the American side; students would soon be of voting age, yet their minds are still radical and impressionable. The U.S. sent secret agents disguised as exchange students to every British University to investi-



gate Youth movements. Whitehall attempted to counter this plot by alerting students to this threat. Free pamphlets were distributed entitled *Tips for Students*. American agents were described as

"Male or female between the age of 20 - 23; both sexes have a tendency towards short hair and wearing plaid. They often carry cameras which are believed to be used for photographing secret documents."

While Whitehall was busy subverting this phase of subversion, flights to America on the pretext of summer jobs were luring students from their native soil. To prevent the flights would have meant a break in diplomatic relations; the flights, appearing harmless, were allowed to continue. Later investigations revealed that the students entering the U.S. were subject to intense and subtle brainwashing and then sent back to England as agents working for American pay. A few loyal subjects withstood the pressure and became unwilling participants in America's Man in Space Program. Britain viewed with suspicion the choice of the latest astronaut, a student from L.S.E., to be sent to the moon; Washington claims the choice was made to give Britain an active part in the space race.

The influence exerted by America on the unsuspecting minds of television and cinema fans became a great concern. Precautions were taken to remind viewers that many films were American and propaganda. All American films were given a double A stamp which stood for American Alert. Only adults with a marked British accent and swearing loyalty to Her Majesty's Government would be admitted. After the showing of an American film, a short British-produced film, *Let's Look at Life*, was shown, to strengthen national identity. Sound tracks of U.S. films were dubbed in English—English as distinct from American English. As the British film industry increased their output, the House of Commons voted a security tax on American films; the tax was successful in its dual purpose of discouraging the import of American films and the strengthening of Britain's film industry. The removal of the film tax was due mainly to an appeal by the U.S. to the United Nations that the British film tax in effect was taxation without representation and therefore undemocratic. The protest was upheld, since there was no representative of the American film industry seated in Parliament.

After the failure of the film tax, the Commons decided that only subtle tactics could be used; all goods having strong American overtones were removed from the markets, while the sale of traditional British goods was strengthened. Members of Parliament took an oath to wear only tweed coats. The promotion of tea as the only national drink was strengthened by the Tea Three Times a Day Committee; a campaign against coffee drinking was waged by advertisements and culminated in the House of Commons ruling that coffee could be had only by students during exam time or upon presenting a doctor's written order. This measure was met by the resistance of the people. Violence

ensured when on 5th March shiploads of tea were dumped overboard in a symbolic protest by men wearing feathers and painted faces to hide their identity.

Although American subversion had been evident, no official communication from Washington had been sent until 12th March when three armed destroyers anchored in front of the Houses of Parliament to serve a Presidential dispatch. The dispatch invited Britain to become a state with full representation in Congress. The House of Commons, upon deliberation, voted a refusal; the vote was not unanimous due to the opposition of the Socialist Party, who claimed entry into the Union would give them more to reform. Upon withdrawal of the warships a vote of confidence revealed unanimous approval of the Government's action.

Recent developments have called for a national election to allow the people to decide the question of statehood. Negotiations with the United States have resulted in numerous concessions which will be granted to Britain upon her entry as the Fifty-first State. The U.S. has even agreed to accept the British pattern of 51 stars in the flag, one star in the shape of a Union Jack; an extra stripe will be added, since Britain claims to have been one of the original colonies. The United Philatelists have voiced their approval of statehood with the U.S. Postal Department's promise to issue a commemoration stamp.

The position of the Queen has caused much embarrassment to Whitehall; she can no longer reign as monarch since the U.S. does not recognise the hereditary right to rule. The degree of sentimentality with which most people regard her has caused Congress to look into the idea of installing her as Vice-President. This idea has received support from the American Women's Voting Society, who have tried for four elections putting a woman into the Vice-Presidency.

The advantages of statehood are apparent. The change in England will not be outstanding and in many ways advantageous. Londoners have supported statehood with the hope that buildings in Whitehall, no longer needed for government, can be used to solve the housing shortage. Leading educators have suggested that the Houses of Parliament be turned into the main building of a new University. Few alterations would be needed, the meeting rooms of the Lords and Commons could be turned into lecture theatres, while the proximity of the Thames would encourage an excellent rowing team.

The only objection to statehood is the method America used. Although Washington made no reference to warfare if the second offer of statehood was refused, it did reveal that the missile bases installed on British soil were equipped with short range missiles, having an average radius of sixty miles. An appeal to the United Nations is not yet appropriate since no bloodshed or defined aggression has occurred. An appeal will not be made, however, since American citizens have a controlling interest in the bonds and its location is on American soil.

The formality of statehood has become inevitable.

GEORGEANN SUCHLA.

## George Orwell

ORWELL was neither the prolific writer nor the artist in the sense that Lawrence was. And yet, in eight full-length novels, three shorter ones and a handful of essays, he put forward a fundamental humanism, similar in feeling to that of Lawrence but vastly different in emphasis. Orwell's social criticism is looked upon by the great majority of people in terms of his last two books, "Animal Farm" and "1984." To look on Orwell in these terms is to misunderstand what he, as a deeply committed writer, had tried to put across. These last two books represent a synthesis in Orwell's work not particularly an embittered one, but one caused by weariness with the pain of living. To understand what part "Animal Farm" and "1984" do play, it is necessary to look at Orwell's work as a whole. Only with a reading of his work is it possible to see Orwell as a brave, generous and above all a fundamentally honest man. "It is almost impossible to be honest and remain alive" he once wrote and that epitomises Orwell's preoccupation with life. This preoccupation certainly left Orwell a disappointed but not unhappy man. We must agree I think with Raymond Williams that Orwell's case is just part of the paradox of life; "How a great and human tradition can seem at times, to all of us, to disintegrate into a caustic dust."

Orwell once wrote of Koestler that he was an example of the special class of literature that has arisen out of the European political struggle since the rise of Fascism. "The same could be said of Orwell, for he typified the intellectual movement in Britain during the thirties and forties. It was not only Fascism that gave Orwell his particular brand of commitment, it was also the English Public School system and British imperialism. It was the two forces of Fascism and imperialism which forced Orwell to take odds with his society, to become an ascetic and a puritan, in a non-perjorative sense, and, as Richard Rees has called him "a fugitive from the camp of victory." For Orwell, like Simone Weil, believed passionately in justice. He saw that life was unjust, that the poor and innocent, by virtue of being poor and innocent, suffered and were oppressed. Orwell saw life in terms of black and white, good and bad. Such a situation was clearly manifest but he was unable to bring the two sides together for they were irreconcilable. While he fought injustice with rebellious fervour he was a profoundly serious and, at times, an almost tragic figure with a pessimism that was with him throughout his life.

But Orwell was also a Romantic, a latter day Cobbett in his love of a vanished past, untouched countryside, a timelessness associated with Edwardian summers. He is at his best in describing something that is very dear to him, that has touched him deeply. His obvious love of fishing, and all that is associated with it, peacefulness and beauty of the countryside is almost touchingly portrayed in "Coming up for air." One feels that, like George Bowling, the central character, Orwell wants

to get away from the trials and tribulations of a world half-crazed with power politics and half-numbed with false values. One is reminded of his comments on Dickens as "a free intelligence, a type hated with equal hatred by all the smelly little orthodoxies which are now contending for our souls." Orwell would have liked to become a "free intelligence," to throw off the "smelly little orthodoxies," but because life was so vast and since it affected him so directly he could not. Hence much of Orwell's work, if not all, abounds with paradox. While he was a humane man, he so successfully communicated extreme inhumanity; while a convinced Socialist he put forward damaging criticism of his ideals; he was deeply class conscious and hated the gulf that separated the classes, and yet his later work has the assumption of basic inequality of the classes; and, again, although extremely articulate about the abuse of language, he was one of its worst perpetrators. It can, however, be argued that life itself is one general paradox, that Orwell and his writing is merely one particular aspect of it. Everything human is ambivalent.

The point must be emphasised that above all Orwell was a human being, although a complex one. On the one hand he had an almost childlike love for adventure. On the other hand he was deeply conscious of the role he had, or thought he had, to play in human affairs. A role that amounted to personal involvement with events that hardly touched the mass of people. There is no doubt that, as he portrays in perhaps his finest work, "Homage to Catalonia," he enjoyed street fighting in Barcelona, even being wounded by a sniper. But the enthusiasm he generates in his account of the Civil War in Spain must be balanced against why he had to go. He felt himself personally involved, he fought in Spain not only for "common decency" but also because he could not bear armchair idealism. Similar sentiments made him make an Odyssey to the industrial north to discover not merely that the road from Mandalay to Wigan is a long one but also "to escape not merely from imperialism but from every form of man's domination over man." Orwell knew, on his return from Burma and the imperial police, that something was radically wrong with the system; what it was he was only vaguely aware. He set out a member of the "lower upper middle class," he came back belonging to no class, a confirmed socialist. We can sense his love of adventure in a Wigan lodging house, we can sense his essential bourgeois ideals in his hyper-sensitivity in seeing the landlord cut bread with dirty finger-nails, we can also sense his deep commitment. He writes of his return from Burma in "The Road to Wigan Pier," and states "... at that time failure seemed to me the only virtue. Every suspicion of self-advancement, even to succeed in life to the extent of earning a few hundred a year, seemed to me spiritually ugly, a species of bullying."

When he came back from Burma Orwell was conscious of an immense weight of guilt that he had to expiate. His first book, "Down and Out in Paris and London," is symptomatic. He was washing himself clean of his sins in the back streets and dosshouses of France and

England. In this book, of considerable sociological interest, he begins a penance that takes a long time to work itself out. "Burmese Days" is a novel of his life in the Imperial Police; some would consider it his finest novel and one can sense the horror of what is committed in the name of Empire. As he said in his essay on Kipling, "We all live by robbing Asiatic coolies, and those of us who are 'enlightened' all maintain that those coolies are set free; but our standard of living, and hence our 'enlightenment,' demands that the robbery shall continue." Orwell, throughout his life, could not rid himself of the vision of white exploiting black, or rich exploiting poor. Through all his books one feels he is saying "I am guilty" or, even stronger, "We are guilty."

Certainly his work up to the Spanish War as based on the experience of his penance, and his two novels of this period, "The Clergyman's Daughter" and "Keep the Aspidistra Flying," bear the stamp of his "guilt complex"; both are in some senses autobiographical. Although the protagonist of his second novel is a young woman, Dorothy, the clergyman's daughter, she is very much like Orwell in that she is brave and patient, and above all she has self-discipline and a remarkable sense of duty. And like Orwell she had a horror of the small things that disgusted him, for he must have been the most squeamish of all men. It is not the cold, hunger, frustration of fighting on the Aragon front, the hazards of a tramp's life, or the disadvantages of living in a lodging house that worries Orwell, it is the minor trials of life such as a dirty plate, a shared cup, rats, or a dirty latrine that is the hardest for him to bear. Dorothy reflects on the meaning of faith and says "think of life as it really is, think of the details of life, then think there is no meaning in it . . . It is all or nothing." It is the horrible details of life that Dorothy cannot stomach; like Dorothy, Orwell's motto could have been "all or nothing." He had to endure them to live.

"Keep the Aspidistra Flying" is Orwell in a very disillusioned period. It is a novel of an embittered young man, Gordon Comstock, who declared war on the money-god because "And now abideth faith, hope and money, these three; but the greatest of these is money." Gordon throws up a "good" job in an advertising agency to work for a bookseller, writing poetry in his spare time. Although it tells of the hero's sex life, frustrated by the lack of money, of a middle class poverty, it is in some ways a happy book. Orwell is telling us of the courtship of his first wife, and his great love for fellow human beings. Gordon's rebellion collapses when he puts Rosemary "in the family way," and "would rather cut his right hand off than allow her to have an abortion." It is not the money-god that defeats Gordon, it is the love and self-sacrifice of another human being. This neither Gordon Comstock nor George Orwell could ignore.

"Keep the Aspidistra Flying" marks the end of a stage in Orwell's life, and opens up another where he was immensely happy. His journey to the north, his experiences in Spain, made Orwell feel he was doing something tangible. And yet the end product of this period is "1984"

and "Animal Farm." Although the Spanish War left him "with not less, but more belief in the decency of human beings," and in such a mood he was able to write a buoyant and vigorous novel, "Coming Up for Air," it also left him with a certain air of disbelief. The one mood is the result of the companionship of his comrades in the trenches, the other is the result of the persecution of those comrades not by Franco but by the rest of the Left, largely the Communists. Orwell did not see the Spanish War as a political war, except in very general terms. It was clearly in black and white, of Fascist dictatorship versus Parliamentary democracy. Only when he got to Spain did he realise that the Left could not agree on its own ends. More shattering was his discovery, on his return, that the Left in England had believed the distortions from Spain. He writes: "one of the dreariest effects of this war has been to teach me that the Left-Wing press is every bit as spurious and dishonest as that on the Right."

His persecutions in Spain were the geneses of "Animal Farm" and "1984" and yet "1984" is no more than a re-statement of "Keep the Aspidochelone Flying" on a more comprehensive scale and with deeper political, social and philosophical awareness. "Animal Farm" is a delightfully written politico-social fable, quite obviously the story of the Russian Revolution couched in allegorical terms. Both are too well known to need a great deal of comment, but in some ways, more especially with regard to "1984," they contain all that is good and bad in Orwell's works. Big Brother and Double Think have given to the English language "Orwellian," in the same way as we speak of "Wellsian" and "Shavian." We see Orwell's fears of totalitarianism, but we still see a belief in the common people, "If there is hope it must lie in the proles," but the significant word is "if," and this is the horror of Winston Smith's final torture. The rat episode is crucial, not merely to "1984" but to the whole of Orwell's work. It is at this stage that he cries out "Do it to Julia! Not me." He loses his self-respect, he must now learn to love Big Brother and, indeed, almost does.

But this is not as horrible as it sounds. It may be his last word, but what he is saying is that if you would not suffer for a loved one, another human being, you are worth nothing. It must be "All or nothing." It is the same idea as is to be found in Dostoyevsky's "The Possessed," that a man can only cease to be a slave and become a god by killing himself, because "full freedom will come only when it makes no difference whether to live or not to live." But does Orwell suggest that if we cannot achieve perfection we should end? Orwell is in the extreme here, he is putting over his own personal tragedy, seen through his own eyes, because he believed himself to have failed to live up to his own ideals.

"The essence of being human," he wrote in "Reflections on Ghandi," "is that one doesn't seek perfection, that one is sometimes willing to commit sins for the sake of loyalty, that one does not push asceticism to the point where it makes friendly intercourse impossible, and that one is prepared in the end to be defeated and broken up by

life which is the inevitable price of fostering one's love upon other human individuals."

This is a fitting comment on Orwell himself.

GRAHAM JOHNSON.

Editor's note. This article is an extension of the review of George Orwell's novels recently published in the Penguin series.

## The Eternal Moment

A grin—

And in a moment the years fell back  
For time did not exist  
In this intensity of love.  
Again the black eyes twinkled,  
The roses dripped with redness  
and trickled to the ground,  
Ready for trampling.  
This was the white rose  
The power and strength  
Of all that once was pain.

A perfume—and she breathed again  
The musky incense-sweetness of the garden,  
Felt again the tight, longing ache  
For an evening without shadows.  
The dark petals were crushed, and  
Bleeding, had stuck to the path,  
While fresh pink buds grew wild on thorny bush  
To fade in the sun's intense heat,  
Unwatered by tears.

A direct glance—

Said this was not the faded pink  
This was the white rose  
With strength enough to match the red.  
The end was still the beginning.

She smiled for reply as blindly she plucked at a stem  
The vision passed and still she was alone—  
And so she turned away and cried  
Silently, till something broke,  
And soft pink petals fluttered twisted from her hand.

BARBARA BAKER.

## L'Annee derniere a Marienbad

THE many interpretations of "L'Annee derniere a Marienbad" which have appeared in England have been largely superficial and have often failed to reveal the underlying implications of the film. Robbe-Grillet has said that one can interpret this film as one likes. Critics have been perplexed by this and accused Robbe-Grillet of deliberate obscurantism. However his attitude is perfectly explicable. Just as Bunuel tried to shock the audience with "Un Chein d'Andalon," so Robbe-Grillet does the same with "L'Anne derniere a Marienbad." Knowing that a somewhat snobbish, cultured audience will try to understand and put meanings into his film, he tells them to do this. Many people seemed to have missed his point. He is deliberately mocking the conventional approach to films; the desire always to explain and understand. This approach belongs to a morality which claims to be able to create patterns of behaviour and to establish codes.

The break which Alain Robbe-Grillet and Alain Renais have made with the world of the conventional film is so great that the normal standards of criticism and appreciation cannot be applied by the critics and general public. During the last twenty-five years the novel in France has undergone a transformation in which both the story and the characters in their normally accepted sense have been largely lost. Robbe-Grillet has himself stated that the novelist must try to build a more solid and immediate world instead of a world of psychological and social meanings. Gestures and objects are "there" and in this rather than in any inner value lies their real importance. In this way the world is stripped of its false mystery and the idea of state replaces that of nature. Robbe-Grillet is more concerned with the spatial relationship and distance between objects than with an attempt to penetrate them and reveal an interior meaning. His interest is limited to shapes and visual surfaces. The increasing importance of objects and the changing attitude to the moral order have been gradually developed in the novel by Satre, Cayrol and others. The appearance of "L'Anne derniere a Marienbad" has revealed the same change of attitude in the cinema, but it has been a sudden transition with none of the intermediary stages. It is perhaps for this reason that the film has shocked and puzzled people. Yet related to the development in the field of the novel and to the other works of its author, it belongs to a climate of ideas long-established in France.

Whilst much attention must be given to the scenario and to the ideas of the author, it would be wrong to dissociate the matter from the form. "L'Annee derniere a Marienbad" marks an important stage in the history of cinema technique, but the work must be considered as a whole. Form and content are, in fact, closely related in the film and for this reason alone it cannot be considered as a purely technical exercise.

The action of "L'Annee derniere a Marienbad" takes place in a castle and its grounds and the camera never goes beyond the gardens.



The film presents an enclosed world and the idea of a maze, suggested by the repetitions of phrases and descriptions in the script, is reinforced pictorially. The voice and the camera turn for ever in the same circle, covering the same events, describing the same passages and rooms from which there is no escape. Presented in a completely disconnected way moments of action, gestures and conversations are presented and the constant movement of the camera and the relentless description maintained by main character X are an attempt to find in them a certain order and unity. "*L'Annee dernière à Marienbad*" has no story and, as several reviews have revealed, it is misleading to impose one, for although the film concerns two men, X, M, and one woman, A, it is in no way a love film. The constant struggle between X and A concerns their individual liberty and their image of reality. As X tries to impose his pattern of the events on A so she in turn attempts to preserve her own image.

The central and most solid part of the film is the castle and its grounds. The camera poring ceaselessly over objects, walls and pictures, reinforces the hardness of the object world, its "otherness." Within these fixed and clearly defined bounds people live, but as with the objects we can only see their surfaces. The film does not attempt to penetrate the heart of any one character but rather treats them like the statues in the garden.

A piece of sculpture is essentially an attempt by the artist to fix a moment of human activity, to freeze and reproduce a gesture. It is snatched from the realm of activity to which it belonged and consequently cannot develop. What happened before or after is unimportant as is the figure identity. To give it a name or to suggest its relationship to other events would destroy its unity and relate it immediately to an unending chain of cause and effect. The sculptor preserves the immediate presence of human action. The film is an ideal medium to reveal both a chain of events, a story, and to fix a gesture. At the heart of the film lies a paradox. The action is presented in disjointed scenes in which gestures predominate. The groups of people standing around parallel the statues in the garden. Their actions are incomplete, situated in no particular context and one is not aware of any immediate pattern which links these movements and gestures together in a meaningful whole. To reinforce this idea of fragmentation, in many scenes the groups are filmed in motion and then a shot is frozen and shown as a still. Yet X tries to impose a pattern on his activity, attempts to fix the events which he believed happened and lead them to a conclusion. When A asks him what the statue in the garden represents he interprets it in several different ways, saying though, that an interpretation is unimportant. Between these scenes, however, he explains A's behaviour in an attempt to convince her that he is right. The film as a whole reveals in its form the disjointed nature of human action and in the attitude of X an attempt to create some meaning within those events which concern him. His repetition of phrases and descriptions

takes on an added significance at this point, for as well as imposing a meaning he is trying to convince himself of their reality.

In this world of reality and interpretation time is unimportant for X. The ordering of events in a temporal sequence only has meaning for those who believe in some pattern in the chain of cause and effect, for instance M, who explains several events according to their position in time. It is tempting, as the film shows, to interpret this chain in its chronological order, for in this way events in reality can be explained temporally. For X, however, an event only assumes importance when it is accepted as real by someone. Its temporal situation is of little value. If one explains an act in the present by something which took place in the past, then its reality is implied in this act. Furthermore, in this film where the sequence of events representing a story is less important than their individual reality, the temporal element is largely lost. X relies largely on spatial evidence to substantiate his own image of reality. He thinks that last year at Marienbad is as unimportant as next year, for the events are real at the point where A accepts them as such in her mind. It is within the regular and ordered lines of the castle and garden that X selects and interprets the images which he wants. At the moment when A is seen walking round the walls of the room seeking some physical evidence to refute X's account she comes to the open door. X's voice cries out that the door was closed . . . It is immediately clear that they try to shape the physical situation of objects to their own story. In the final sentence of the film X relates their situation in relation to the castle :—"It seemed in the beginning impossible to lose oneself . . . in the beginning along the straight garden walks, between the statues, their gestures frozen, among the granite flagstones, where you were now already losing yourself, for ever, in the calm night, alone with me." (1) One should not lose oneself in such clearly defined surroundings, but X and A do get lost because they interpret what they see. As human beings they do not merely preserve distances between themselves and the surrounding objects and people. There is, in fact, not the same distance between them which exists between two inanimate objects for they are *conscious* of the distance and begin to interpret it.

Since there is little normal story in the film there is no fixed narrative position. The camera is not directed from one continuous, clearly defined position. Rather it presents a series of images imposed one upon the other in no particular order and it is indeed often difficult to separate real from imagined scenes. There is a considerable range of photographic expression between the hard, clear images of the rooms and gardens and those matching an individual conception of reality. The range extends from dark, almost under-developed pictures to the over-developed shots of the corridor and of A in her bedroom. Thus the images themselves are in no way limited to one emotional pitch but have a flexible, poetic expression. The editing of these scenes with the insertion of completely different images produces the same disjointed effect which is characteristic of the imagination. The film has exactly the same quality as the imagination in that images, whether

belonging to past, present or future, are equally real and actual. They appear disjointed since they do not have that perspective which time brings to a series of events.

In the closing scenes one notices a change in X's attitude to A. He becomes conscious of time and reacts with feeling to her suggestion that they wait a little longer before going away. In fact they walk towards the door as the clock strikes twelve, their act clearly defined in time. Whereas X has given reasons throughout the film why A should leave, the final act is not clearly linked with these projects. The fragmentary nature of the film is preserved until the end and this final revelation of the disparity between project and action, between feelings and action, strips away the image of man as an inexplicable whole with a binding human nature. During the film X has talked of the futility of interpreting gestures, yet has continued to do so for himself and to project from his plan. The final scene does not provide a logical culmination of this plan nor does it contain an indication of A's positive desire to accept X. It is simply another act. In his theories on the novel, Robbe-Grillet has stated that he does not consider tragedy as an inherent aspect of the human condition. He prefers to consider it as situated in space and time. "*L'Année dernière à Marienbad*" illustrates once again his destruction of the illusion in an attempt to create a more realistic attitude to life. The film, however, reveals no positive attitude which might suggest a new construction to replace the one he considers to be out-dated.

RICHARD G. VEASEY.

(1) My translation from the original script published by "Les Editions de Minuit"; Page 172.

*Poems by*

Graham Walshe

To J.B.

It seemed a shame to let him stain  
All the unkempt junk-room memories  
Stored up in amongst the woody smoke  
And dried crusty potato-peelings,  
Just for the sake of the new men.  
Who are we he shrugged  
In the changed darkness,  
But the new men in duplicate,  
With the rankling additional gloss  
Which will blemish our love of young times.  
He brought in the people with the cars  
To trample over our primrose paths  
Our cold crimson coverlets.

Prayer

All it comes down to is love.  
Pressed against the shadow of my life  
An end, crumbling crashes the shanty-frame  
They painted across their artful landscapes,  
So cleverly conceived in malice.

Fearful, the judge, strapped his bulk to Christ's bones;  
Christ's saint blessed no passion of clutching loins.

Corpulent or reverent, washing  
Each way sprays the painting spade, which may  
Turn-trap fresh sods gaping at the wonder of worms,  
Or merely tickle back to dawn the tired dirt.

Rather leave it seethe, such a fine edifice  
Humbly nailed up against our tremulous skies.

## Ted's Last Run

THIS was Ted's last run but Ted himself was probably least enthusiastic about it. The truth is that his companions were not really worried as to whose run it was for after weeks at sea little excuse is needed for an excursion ashore. Ted was not by nature a gregarious man and rarely drank, but once it was known that he was soon to return to England for his release there seemed no doubt that he would have a farewell run ashore.

Edward McIntee was a tall, thin man with straight, dark hair, prominent cheek bones and brown, lustreless eyes. The impassive look of his face was the outward indication of a man whose spirit, initiative and intelligence had been numbed by fifteen long, dark years in the service of the Crown. Ted had hated the life at sixteen, six months after he had joined and the passing years had mellowed this to indifference. He had, in fact, as little enthusiasm for leaving the navy as he had for going ashore to drink tinned beer in the cool of a tropical evening.

The liberty men lined up and in time-honoured fashion the young Sub looked them over as if their stench would soon overcome him and then they filed away and down into the red pinnace. With a final look of disgust and a high-pitched command, which struck awe into nobody, the pinnace departed for the shore. The boat, which for its size held a remarkable number of men, bounced over the sparkling blue water towards the island.

There was nothing imposing about the island, situated as it was roughly in the centre of the vast Pacific Ocean. From the sea there appeared to be endless, golden sand with stately palms forming a green band above. Whilst across the surf of its shallow entrance the beautiful light blue-green of a tropical lagoon shimmered on the horizon. The sight somehow stirred in able seaman McIntee something which had lain inactive for many years. He felt the warmth of this beauty and for the first time he looked forward to his release and began to think what he would do. But Ted had little time for awakening for the boat neared the shore and the island paradise faded and finally disappeared. The golden sand had changed to white coral dust and the tents of the naval encampment, dusty and windblown, appeared round the point. There was no grass, only palms and fragments of coral. In between the rows of tents, isolated and with a splendid view through the sprinkling of palms of the lagoon, were little tilted troughs, about three feet from the ground, running into buckets. There was no modesty here. One of these sun-bleached and wind-torn tents was the N.A.A.F.I. where the hot, thirsty sailor could buy tinned lager beer and drink on the windy foreshore. There was a jollity and humour here round the sandy tables but a shallowness in the carefree atmosphere and a tinge of sorrow in the song hung in the warm humid air.

The liberty boat scraped and groaned alongside the narrow, wooden jetty and its passengers, Ted amongst them, scrambled out and made for the dusty land. In a little laughing group they made their way

through the ankle deep sand. Although it was early evening it was still warm and sweat trickled down the brown faces, puckered in the glare of the departing sun. The white dust soon invaded the once black shoes and lightened the once blue stockings. On either side of Ted strode the prime movers in this excursion as, indeed, they had been in many before. Brum was a little man, looking older than his twenty-five years. His face seemed to tell of eternal melancholia whilst his sunken blue-grey eyes said nothing. His proud reputation as a drinking man was, perhaps only matched by Steve's, Ted's other companion. Steve possibly had more cause for melancholia than Brum, for he was a great and unquenchable fighter of loosing battles. The fringe of this little group of men kicking their way through the loose white sand, consisted mainly in disciples of these two marching, with eager faces, to exploits as yet unknown.

At the far end of the encampment a large brown tent stood apart and that was their journey's end. Darkness was approaching but as yet it was still light enough to see, across the lagoon, the black silhouettes of the trees against the darkening canvas of the sky. They sat at a little round table and Ted took the collection and joined the queue at the beer counter. One crate contained twenty-four tins of luke-warm lager beer and this he carried and placed on the table. While he pulled up a wickerwork chair skilled hands tore at the case and opened cans. Ted looked at his tin, "Tennants," he thought. "Well, it could be worse."

Brum and Steve looked happy enough with it anyway, so he took a good pull but his face seemed to say "maybe it couldn't."

He hardly ever drank beer but it was this or nothing. Surveying his can again he took another swallow. "It is not pleasant at all," he mused.

Ted now began to take long pulls and to try to pour the warm, brown liquid straight down his throat, by-passing his mouth and taste areas.

He was beginning to achieve some degree of success when he noticed that his first can had been emptied and another full one had replaced it.

Brum and Steve were meanwhile in conversation with Olle and were congratulating him on his latest conviction for drinking in the tent lines at night.

The tent and surrounding tables had by now quite filled up and a game of darts was in progress with a board hanging from one of the tent poles. Apart from the tables and chairs the only other furniture was a battered piano in the corner, unplayed because the keys, once depressed, showed a marked reluctance to spring up again. The day had quite gone when Ted turned his attention to the men around him. He thought of them coming here every night contented that they just devoured time and he wondered how he would get on when he had his own life to lead. Would he miss these people and their improbable stories of impossible exploits?

Ted had finished his second and was well through his third can when he concluded his brief survey of the scene. He entered into a conversation with Brum, Steve and Olle, the latter having put a half-full case of beer on the table by way of admittance, about the team for the forthcoming test-match. As the conversation progressed he did not fail to notice that he was receiving very prompt service inasmuch as cans were very promptly replaced when expended.

A good portion of the water having reached the latter end of its bodily journey, Ted got up and walked out of the tent with a view to relieving himself of it.

"Blast!" he said with great emphasis as he walked into a wire from the tent which hit him in the mouth. He noticed, as he walked towards the appointed spot, that perhaps his control over his limbs was not as good or complete as earlier, and his mind began to whisper "moderation in all things."

His destination stood right on the point and consisted principally of a corrugated iron trough, supported at one end by two sticks with the other end in the sand. As he stood there he could see across the moonlit lagoon, and above him the stars stood out in a clear indigo sky.

When Ted wound his way back to the tent he found nothing had changed there and a fresh tin of Tennants beer awaited his attention. It was cooler now but Ted was becoming rapidly oblivious of the temperature. The pile of empties by the table grew. He began to notice that somehow he seemed to be detached from the rest of the world and the hubbub of the beer-tent seemed far away. It was as if he were watching a play in a huge empty hall where the voices came echoing to him.

Time had passed. It now appeared necessary to Ted to take a second pilgrimage. The wire struck him a second violent blow in the mouth and he had not a little difficulty in getting round it. His legs, and indeed his whole body, seemed to be very tired so that this time he did not walk nearly so far before reducing the pressure in his bladder to a less painful level.

"That's better, ain't it, mate?" said Steve as Ted settled himself down at the table.

Ted nodded in an affirmative manner and, in order to rest his tired legs, decided to put them up in the adjoining empty chair. His next recollection was that he was in the sand under his upturned chair and that his left arm and shoulder were wet. He was lying in a small puddle of his own spew.

"Pick 'im up, Brum," cried a loud voice from a few tables away.

"Yer pick me up," said a weak voice from the floor.

Ted was duly re-installed in his seat and given another can of beer. He clumsily wiped his chin on shirt sleeve and took a good pull of the now completely tasteless beer. He felt sick again. Then, with the abandon to which we are prone on these occasions, he leant forward, spewed at his feet and slowly subsided to the floor.

"He's 'ad it, mate," commented an astute observer.

"Come on, oppo, we'll take you somewhere you can lie down a bit," said Steve, dragging Ted to his feet.

Brum and Steve carried him, to the accompaniment of a few feeble protests, out and dumped him with little ceremony in the nearest available tent.

"Christ" moaned Ted, rolling on to his side and vomiting on his unknown host's floor, but he was alone. Brum and Steve had already rejoined the party.

He was still in the same position when they and a couple of others came to collect him half an hour or so later. The Navy does not believe in leaving the fallen on the field of battle. They carried the groaning Ted back to the jetty in relays. Once, it is true, he said he would walk alone, but when released had collapsed without taking a step.

Advice to and about Ted was profuse from the assembled liberty-men waiting for the pinnacle. The general feeling being that he would have to get over the prow alone if he were not to spend the night in the cells.

The pinnacle soon arrived and Ted was dumped in with little regard for his person. It is well known that men as drunk as he was fall so limply that they rarely damage themselves and, anyway, he would not feel the pain until the morrow.

The wind had got up a little and the return passage was a little rougher. The pinnacle crashed its way along the channel, around the reef and on to the ship. The ladder and pontoon were on the leeward side of the ship, but it was still not easy getting out of the boat and up to the deck. Men noisily and clumsily disembarked whilst the same Sub-Lieutenant peered down outraged. Ted had done very well to get unaided on to the pontoon and was half-way up the ladder when the ship gave a little extra shudder and he fell headlong on to the steel of the pontoon below.

"Looks like a cannon-ball and flag job" said a slurred voice and there was a little round of half-hearted laughter.

Ted's shipmates, a little sobered by the event, retrieved the limp form and manhandled it up to the deck. The Sub, hardly glanced at the pitiful heap as he turned to make for the warmth of the wardroom.

"Take him away and get him before me on the quarterdeck at 07.00."

But Able Seaman McIntee was destined never to be there for his release had come through sooner than had been expected.

RON SMITH.



## Chorus

"Then Jesus was led by the Spirit up into the desert, to be tempted by the devil. After a fast of forty days and nights he was hungry."

Chorus    The sun is hot in the south this summer.  
The earth is dry, dry as death-dust.  
There is no water, no water.  
Upon their tongues death is a crust.

Mother    My child is dead  
Who killed my child?  
His eyes were red,  
His look was wild.  
My child, my child,  
Who took the life from your brown body?  
You were young; you were not ready.  
The rocks are dry, the sand is dry.  
Someone has taken the river away.  
My child is dead.  
Who killed my child?

Chorus    The sun burns in the south.  
The dust scorches the mouth.  
The wheat will not grow.  
The harvest is straw.

Old Man    Three score years have passed me.  
My soul is hungry  
For death.  
                    Children go,  
Children and the young men  
Die. People want them,  
But they die,  
And I am not wanted but I stay.  
The sun does not burn my old tough skin.  
My body is thin.  
It does not need the water,  
It does not need the wheat.  
The woman is my daughter,  
And her child was taken by the heat.  
Soon hunger will take her,  
And I am her father.

Chorus    Look at the old man lying there. It is night, but he does not need sleep. He lies on his curved back, with his long arms ape-like on his rug. They were strong arms once, but

they need no food now. His mouth is tight closed, and his lips are dry. But they are always dry now; they need no water.

His small square room is yellow with the moon. In the corner where he cannot see it lying there, sleeps the child's cot, its womb empty. He knows it is there; he knows its wood frame, for he made it for his daughter before she was. He saw himself making it, his strong arms, his clever hands shaping the wood. The wood is weary with the weight of two generations, but it can rest now. It is empty: it will bear no more.

Old Man I only feared death once, only before I had a child. I knew this body would go, but then I had no flesh which was of my flesh which would live after me. Flesh of my body which would live for ever, after the death of this hulk of mine. But the flesh of my flesh is dying, has died, and I alone will be left, useless, a dead frame, but not dead. Is it always like that, birth dying before death?

Chorus The wood of the cot will bear no more.  
Small feet will never sign the floor.  
Sleep this house, sleep,  
For the grave is deep.

Sleep you skull of a house,  
And guard these corpses in your cavities.

ALAN D. HARRIS.

### *Reviews by P. J. Hooker*

## Genius or Prophet?

D. H. Lawrence : *Apropos of Lady Chatterley's Lover and Other Essays.* (Penguin Books 2/6.)

LAWRENCE, people said, was a genius, and many of his timid admirers sighed with relief. Here was an excuse to enjoy the novels and ignore the terrible but beautiful force behind them. Genius is the keyword, the critic's manna. It enables us to justify a standpoint of apartness, to enjoy a work of passion without the involvement and transformation that passion demands. Let us admit that Lawrence, Blake, and, dare it be whispered, Henry Miller, are geniuses, the better

to ignore their ideas. Genius has the connotation of inebriation, loneliness and insanity. He is not a "practical" man. Ordinary men and women are safer in the hands of politicians. Aren't they?

It is precisely thoughts of this nature that these essays will arouse in a perceptive reader. We do not find this kind of writing in our contemporary reviews and highbrow weeklies, because Lawrence, unlike so many of our intellectuals, wrote with a total vision of life. He understood how man far from lives by mind alone, and his writing was the work of a whole man directed to making men whole in body and mind. His writing is warm with passion and blood. He wanted men and women to be able to think sex, fully, completely, honestly and cleanly. He saw as the only hope for a rootless and frustrated civilisation of the Twentieth Century, a revolution in sexual thinking that would return men to their instinctive harmony with the universe, which lies slumbering under the trash of unreal motifs imposed by industrialisation. Prejudice tells us that this is the ranting of a maniac, and the critics supply the word that explains how a maniac could write good novels, "genius." Fortunately the lie is not difficult to explode, if we substitute the term, prophet. If we admit that Lawrence was a prophet who saw beneath and beyond the immediate superficialities, to the basic realities of our civilisation, we become involved in his vision and must either accept or reject it, with equal conviction. The memory of Lawrence will not be entirely abused, if his writings can help men to break out of their inertia and become passionately concerned with living.

In providing this collection of Lawrence's most provocative essays, Penguin Books have done a great service to the reading public. It contains four essays by Lawrence, including the famous "Introduction to his paintings" which no-one interested in modern art should fail to read, and Mark Schorer's "Introduction to *Lady Chatterley's Lover*," one of the most perceptive and sympathetic critical works on Lawrence that I have read. The four essays give Lawrence's most explicit description of his beliefs, and the title essay, written when he was dying, is a fine tribute to the validity of convictions which he carried with him to the grave.

The publication of this book in such an accessible form, should prevent much wilful distortion of this great writer's aims, and re-illuminate a topic on which too much has been written in ignorance and prejudice, "Pornography and Obscenity."

## Fighting Terms, Thom Gunn

(Faber and Faber, 12/6)

THIS slim volume of poems which first appeared in 1954, contains some of the most significant poetry of the last decade. It announced the emergence of Gunn as one of the young poets who was to rescue English poetry from the threat of sterility which haunts every age of transition. The book is interesting to read today in the new Faber edition, both for its own merits, and in the light of Gunn's subsequent development.

Since 1954 Gunn has become known as the poet of the black jackets, the coffee-bar cowboys and motor-bike fiends of the States. That, at least, is his pose, the ground which nourishes much of his inspiration. In this first book his commitment was less defined. The title is apt. The terms with which he is going to battle for coherence in experience and the subconscious, are coming to birth through the poet's struggle for articulation and commitment.

"The struggle for an uncommitted air,  
struggle with fluency, the state between  
To which I still return who look elsewhere."

The poetry is all in the conflict. There is a sense of bafflement, of the poet's clash with experiences outside his understanding, and his attempt to define them in terms of his art. Like Donne in the Sixteenth Century, Gunn is concerned with examination and discussion, and in gaining by this process new territories in which poetry and the human mind can operate. It is in this sense that poetry can assume the vital role of formulating the consciousness of an age. Gunn's poems are not for men who have "arrived," and are accustomed to view poetry, if at all, as a narcotic served with tea and buns.

His poetry is vigorous, rooted in the direct action of the mind on the world of sense and idea. The confusion which is the inevitable result of this shock contact, is more honest in the circumstances of our time than poetry which imposes a pattern from the poet's commitment and devolves into hardened attitudes as some of Gunn's later work has tended to do. Frustration and disillusionment are here, of course, but the existence of the poetry suggests a vindication of the human spirit in face of fearful odds. Experience, Gunn shows us, is not so simple that we can dismiss it with curses or hosannas.

"Fighting Terms" is essential reading for anyone who wishes to understand the achievement of Gunn in the guerilla warfare of the mind among the beast-infested jungles of the 'fifties and 'sixties.

## Breakthrough?

THE NEW POETRY, selected and introduced by A. Alvarez.  
(Penguin Books, 3/6.)

PENGUIN MODERN POETS 1 AND 2.  
(Penguin Books, 2/6 each.)

THE Penguin new poetry has been selected and given a fighting introduction by Mr. A. Alvarez. In reviews that I have read, the feeling seems to be that Mr. Alvarez has been unfair to the Movement poets. For example, there are only eight poems here by Philip Larkin, whereas there are 17 and 21 by Thom Gunn and Ted Hughes respectively. I agree that his method of constructing a poem out of eight quotations from Movement poets in the introduction, is of dubious validity, but this is, after all, a personal selection and Mr. Alvarez has chosen the poems quite in harmony with the principles he sets out.

If we do not accept the letter of the introduction, we must recognise its fervent and sincere spirit. This is the kind of vital, partisan criticism that is needed to re-establish the importance of poetry in society, and to indicate the grave danger society invites by ignoring it. Personally I do agree with Mr. Alvarez that gentility, a temptation akin to letting inertia sew up the ravelled sleeve of care, is the poet's most immediate enemy. At the same time our dogmatism should not blind us to the real contribution of the Movement to English poetry. If we are not to pose as Dr. Johnsons of modern literature, it is essential to admit the validity of its attitudes, and to recognise the fact that it did produce some very good poetry.

I am convinced that the inclusion of the two American poets will benefit anyone wishing to understand contemporary English poetry, but I was surprised by Mr. Alvarez's exclusion from his selection of what seem to me, to be several very significant poets. Jon Silkin and Adrian Mitchell, for example.

The Penguin Modern Poets series fulfils a vital need in providing cheap editions of contemporary poetry for those people who are not sufficiently interested to invest in hardback editions, but conscious enough to want to know what is going on in the world of poetry today. The obvious contrast between the work of Lawrence Durrell and R. S. Thomas, or Kingsley Amis and Dom Moraes, will give an indication of the many tones of the poet's voice in our time.

When all the theories have been expounded, we must still admit that poetry is never entirely either blasphemous, or gentle, or sceptical. It remains beyond definition as a singular form of expression. These small selections show the importance of the poet's individual voice, and the wide areas in which poetry can operate. I hope that future selections will vindicate Mr. Alvarez's belief that "a good deal of poetic talent exists in England at the moment," and will restore the lack of balance in his selection by presenting to the reading public the fine poets which it omitted.

*Reviews by P. W. A. Banham*

## "Under the Volcano"

By Malcolm Lowry. Penguin Modern Classics, 5/-.

SINCE his death in 1957 Lowry's literary reputation has been steadily increasing, but this volume is probably the first time that his work has become available to the general public.

Lowry was a drunkard, and this book is the record of the thoughts and sufferings of the last day of a drunkard, but although it is largely auto-biographical "Under the Volcano" never degenerates into a mere record of self-pity. One of Lowry's poems, "Comfort," expresses his stubborn attitude to life :

"You are not the first man to have the shakes,  
the wheels, the horrors, to wear the scarlet  
snowshoe . . .

You are not the first man to be caught lying,  
nor to be told that you are dying."

Lowry believes, like many romantic poets, that art is the record of one's own suffering. There is in this work a sense of the battle of the individual against the universe : the greatest hell of the individual is the terror which comes from a sense of the loss of one's own identity. Geoffrey Firmin, the hero, is desperately trying to find his own soul, but his vision is one of disorder and a freedom from social values which has caused him to divorce his wife and leave his job. He is true to these values, and in the manner of his life dies a violent and nightmarish death. After his wife and half-brother have spent the major part of the action of the book in trying to "save" him, he can still say :

"True, I've been tempted to talk peace. I've been beguiled by your offers of a sober and non-alcoholic Paradise. At least I suppose that's what you've been working round towards all day. But now I've made up my melodramatic little mind what's left of it, just enough to make up. Cervantes! That far from wanting it, thank you very much, on the contrary, I choose . . ."

Here his words fade away in the typical drink-befuddled haze in which he exists. At the same time one senses that his accusations against the other characters have a truth both to us as well as him.

There is more than suffering in "Under the Volcano" : the drunkard also possesses extraordinary insight into the true value of experience, and there is much of the mystic's ecstasy about many of the events in this book, as well a sense of humour about the situation which drunkards frequently possess. This is helped by Lowry's technique in treating each incident slowly, and piling up one impression after another with a language which is twisted to give a total effect of the richness of the individual's consciousness and spiritual suffering.

The style is, therefore, not economical, and to take many passages from this book out of context would probably give the impression that it was ornate and florid. But there is an atmosphere about the whole work which envelops and carries away the reader in the same way as one of Firbank's novellas or Douglas's "South Wind."

It is this atmospheric quality, and the perfect relationship of the style to the tragic vision which finally seems to raise "Under the Volcano" above the standard of the majority of the fiction of the past two decades.

## "The Literary Critics"

George Watson (Pelican Books, 4/6)

DESPITE the increasing competition in the paper-back field, Penguin

Books seem to have a habit of pulling unexpected tricks from their sleeves to maintain their superiority. This volume is another example of their ability, a cheap book on literary criticism which has been sadly lacking for a long time. But although the card has been successfully produced, it has proved to be not the one we expected.

Mr. Watson wisely limits his book to descriptive criticism and to a score or so of literary critics. This method, however, inevitably produces an unbalanced impression of a critic's total importance to the layman, or a sense of lopsidedness to the reader with a wider knowledge of the subject; thus Johnson has considerable space allocated to him in the centre of the book while Pater is dismissed by occasional references. This book is, however, a bold attempt to tackle an extremely difficult subject, and covers a surprising amount in a comparatively short space. What is really needed to do justice to this subject is a series comparable to the Penguin Guides to English Literature but dealing exclusively with literary criticism, in the same way that these volumes expanded the material of Sir Ivor Evans' "Short History of English Literature." In the meantime this book is to be recommended as an introduction to certain aspects of critical writing.

## "Prospero's Cell"

Lawrence Durrell (Faber Paperbacks, 6/-)

WITH this edition of "Prospero's Cell," Lawrence Durrell's lesser known trilogy of travel books on Greek islands becomes completely available in paperbacks. "Bitter Lemons" and "Reflections on a Marine Venus" dealt with Cyprus and Rhodes; this volume is described as a "Guide to the landscape and manners of the island of Corcyra."

Durrell's prose is written with all the sensibility of a poet, and although his literary achievements have perhaps been overpraised in recent years, his sensitivity to atmosphere is a point on which most critics have been agreed. He has realised the mistake of most writers of travel books as trying to impose a form on what is essentially formless material, and has wisely presented us with his impressions in diary form which is occasionally expanded into a monograph on a particular subject. A glance at the index (Remedies, Peasant, Richard Lion-heart, Salt-pans, Scheria, Sea Legend) gives an impression of the diversity of the material included. Although his impressions are pre-war ones, and the American conquest of the Ægean may have changed many of the situations, this is a book to be read by anyone with a strong grievance against the British Stolidity and Weather, and an essential for escapists and Graecophiles.

## Four Aldine Paperbacks

published by J. M. Dent and Son at 5/- each

### Treasury of Humorous Quotations

THIS volume, collected and edited by Evan Esar, and re-edited by

Nicholas Bentley for the English publication, is a welcome addition to anyone's bookshelf; it supplants previous collections in that it deals exclusively in epigrams, whereas other "Treasures" have usually been compiled from comic verse, anecdotes, short stories, portraits, and even passages from plays. All the old favourites are there, plus plenty of lesser-known humorists, especially such American wits as Fred Allen and Helen Rowland. The whole gamut of epigrammatic wit is covered, from La Rochefoucauld's mordant profundity to Wilde's scintillating, superficial brilliance. At the very worst, there is sufficient material here for the averagely astute reader to establish and conserve a reputation for being a sparkling conversationalist.



## "Versus"

by Ogden Nash

THIS is another reprint, of a collection of Nash's poetry (I didn't dare say "verses") first published in 1949. Old friends or new admirers, this is for everybody; it glitters, it sparkles, and the wit leaps at you like soda bubbles. You read straight through to the end, only thinking of the slight ache just behind your ribs, and when you get there, you suddenly realise that the man has a delicate control of rhythm and his horrible, viciously twisted rhymes show a master's touch in handling language. But all the same, definitely not to be analysed; to be taken in heavy doses as an antidote to melancholy, lethargy, or over-intellectualisation.

## "Fishing for Beginners"

by Maurice Wiggin

BEING a fisherman less than anything else in the world—except perhaps a book reviewer—I find it rather hard to say anything constructive about this work. I am assured by a friend who is a fisherman that the book is very highly thought of among cognoscenti, and obviously a cheap reprint of a standard reference work is always to be appreciated. One fairly unusual feature in a paperback—it contains diagrams and illustrations, all of a technical nature, but admirably done. Personally I found the print a little small, but I suppose this is carping (sorry—I read this the same evening as the *Treasury of Humorous Quotations*).

## "Under Milk Wood"

by Dylan Thomas

WHAT is there to say about this undoubted masterpiece? I think only that this paperback edition (the first, to my knowledge) lightens the tremendous load one's pocket has to bear if one wants to read even a reasonable amount of the literature which is readily available today. The text is preceded by a short note outlining the genesis of the play—not a critical exegesis relating it to Thomas' other work, but a simple recounting of how it came to be written.

JEREMY N. J. PALMER.

## Free-Will and Determinism—An Answer

MR. MOORMAN'S article on this subject is interesting both for the ingenious theory which he has brought to light to clarify the problem, and in his sublime assurance in discussing determinists and indeterminists as thick-headed muddlers and "refugees from reason." Such an approach is surely presumptuous in one who admits that the problem has not yet been solved, even in these enlightened times.

There are many points in his argument which cannot be allowed to remain unchallenged. It is admitted that human dignity demands a grander scale of reference than the deterministic notion of man inevitably acting upon given antecedents. Why not be honest, Mr. Moorman, and call this grander scale of reference free-will. It is further objected that any conventional explanation of free-will tends to lead the philosopher-theologian up a blind alley. However unpleasant it may seem to modern rationalists, such blind alleys are all too common in philosophic and scientific thought. Unless one wants to batter one's head against an unshakeable wall it is wise to accept some limitation on the human mind and admit that certain problems have never been, nor ever seem likely to be solved. To any conscientious scholar in any discipline the designation "mystery" is all too distressingly prevalent.

In rejecting the theories of "humdrum philosophical indeterminists" it is suggested that in any hard decision one feels that there is only one answer. My quarrel here is with the word "feels." Surely one brought up in an atmosphere of sceptical rationalism must be the first to admit that a vague feeling can hardly be accepted as a proof of determinism. Because a person feels overcome he cannot conclude that he could only have acted in that particular way. The article (having, to the author's satisfaction, squashed the tautologous pronouncements of indeterminists) proceeds to assert a distinction between freedom and moral responsibility. If carried to its reasonable conclusion such a doctrine would lead to chaos as will be pointed out later. The equation of free-will and responsibility is one that is, and has been, basic to man and his society throughout history. To prove their interrelation the apologist has challenged the determinist philosopher to act upon his principles and advocate a society which can accept no moral responsibility since it has been denied freedom, confident in the knowledge that such a challenge will never be executed.

Let us turn from destructive criticism to a constructive consideration of the problems of free-will, after which the merit of the hypothesis of Clarence Shute that the moral situation consists of deterministic and indeterministic elements, will be better able to be judged. Most arguments against free-will result from an ignorance of the points at issue so it will be as well to note that we indeterminists are not trying to prove before elucidating what we are. First, we are not trying to explain freedom, as this follows an acceptance of the fact; second, we are not claiming that all men are free all the time, but only those who use reason unimpeded by a subjective state or

objective reality; third, we are not attempting to prove that all acts are free; vegetative functions, some sense functions, some intellectual and emotional functions and even first movements of the will are not free. Free-will is defined as the power to choose between alternatives; that is, a power which, when all the requisites for action are fulfilled, is able to act or refrain from action, to take one course or another. Choice concerns the means to an end, for every end can be classed as a means to another, eventually to the Ultimate end, God (or the desire for happiness, if this will make agnostics any happier).

The first proof is that of practical persuasion. Though determinists posit their theories, in practice they act on the assumption that they are free. Free-will is the basis of personal dignity, all moral, civil and political freedoms. If the determinist still maintains this practical persuasion to be fake it would mean that human nature is irresistibly subject to error on a basic issue of human life. Were this concept of freedom fake, philosophers could have repudiated it for determinism and carried their ideas out in practice. A final blow dealt to determinists by this proof is that they have not supplied any adequate proof of their claim that freedom does not exist.

A second proof can be provided by the individual's introspection. By observation of his act of choosing a man realises that responsibility for the determination of that act cannot be attributed to anyone or thing but himself. In his experience each man can cite occasions where the circumstances have been about identical yet the choice different. As well as a realisation of freedom during an act, feelings of pride or shame, which would be nonsensical if not dependent upon the tenet of free-will, can be evoked in retrospect. The nature of the will itself provides the third proof. The will is the rational appetite of man which, guided by the intellect, seeks necessarily the ultimate good (God or perfect happiness). Experience teaches the individual that the will can choose lesser goods, e.g. material possession. Such a choice must proceed from within man, being a pursuit of good as presented by the intellect to the will. Exterior influences, being lesser goods, cannot force the object of the will as this is forced by its own internal volition. A fourth and last argument of free-will, that from the moral order of things, can be stated syllogistically. The moral order is something real and true: but free-will is the very foundation of morality: therefore free-will is real and true.

Acceptance of these proofs depends largely upon one's preparedness to accept the evidence of experience of oneself and all mankind. The crux of the matter lies in the equation of freedom and moral responsibility. If this is accepted, proof of free-will naturally follows. Even Mr. Moorman's erudite attempts to distinguish the two are totally unconvincing. Until determinists remedy this difficulty their arguments remain wholly inadequate. Clarence Shute's hypothesis that "the moral situation names a complex of events which overlap . . . and that some elements of the complex can be understood only in terms of casual determinism, and other only in terms of indeterminism" is a courageous

attempt to explain the complex nature of a human act. It has already been pointed out that the indeterminist does not try to prove that all acts are free but agrees that even first movements of the will can be classed as determined. If this is so the indeterminist's position is not so very far from Clarence Shute's idea of deterministic-indeterministic complex involved in human acts. This does not mean that the two cannot be reconciled. Just as the scientist studying quantum mechanics must approach the problem of waves as either having wave or particle characteristics, so the philosopher is limited in approaching the problem of action either from a determinist or an indeterminist standpoint. This does not preclude the possibility that in either case further knowledge may produce a solution to the division and enable the inter-relation between the two opposing theories to be understood. The admission in this hypothesis that both deterministic and indeterministic elements exist suggests that the modern rationalist is more in accord with the Christian apologist than he might care to admit.

MICHAEL POWER.

## Correspondence

29, Khartoum Road,  
Southampton, U.K.  
22nd January, 1962.

The Editor,  
"Transition,"  
Box 2153,  
Kampala, Uganda.

Dear Sir,

As I confessed at the time, the article of mine on East Africa entitled "Ten Weeks" which you published in the second edition of "Transition" contained many premature judgments and oversimplifications, some, as you will know, sir, resulting from the short time at my disposal, others from ignorance or wrong-headedness. One group of misrepresentations, at least, I would now like to withdraw.

In trying to explain that my wish to come to East Africa was specific and considered rather than the off-shoot of a vague desire to "go to Africa," I entered into a comparison between West and East Africa which I now regard as ill-considered in many respects. While I still do not agree with the thesis that all Africans are alike (I believe there are dissimilarities as marked as those within Europe), such a brief contrast was bound to produce an absurdly distorted thumb-nail sketch of my view of West Africa, and to imply that I imagined it to be an undifferentiated area. Rather than try inadequately to qualify or further explain the point I was attempting to make, I would prefer for the moment simply to erase my remarks about West Africa and apologise to anyone who may have been irritated by them.

Yours faithfully,

DAVID COOK.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS FOR BOOKS RECEIVED

<i>The Rebel</i>	ALBERT CAMUS	Peregrine Books 7/6
<i>The Affair</i>	C. P. SNOW	Penguin Books 4/-
<i>Rimbaud</i>		Penguin Books 7/6

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